



About Feeding America

Feeding America is the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity, with more than 200 member food banks serving all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Each year, we feed more than 37 million Americans who live without consistent access to food, including 14 million children and nearly 3 million senior citizens. (*Hunger in America, 2010*)

Today, one in six Americans is struggling with hunger. 49 million Americans live at risk of hunger, including 17 million children, according to figures released by the USDA in November, 2009.

Feeding America's 203 food banks secure and distribute 3 billion pounds of donated food and grocery products annually through a network of approximately 61,000 agencies, such as food pantries, soup kitchens, emergency shelters and after-school programs.

Feeding America distributes donated food items that are nutritious and wholesome, as well as personal care items that cannot be purchased with food stamps (SNAP benefits) such as shampoo, diapers, toothpaste and laundry detergent.

Americans can help end hunger by donating, advocating and volunteering. To find out more about more, visit www.feedingamerica.org.

The Face of Hunger Today

The face of hunger is changing. The USDA says that more than 49 million – 1 in 6 Americans – Americans don't have dependable, consistent access to enough food due to limited money and resources.

The Feeding America network provides emergency food assistance to more than 37 million Americans each year—including more than 14 million children and nearly 3 million seniors. Thirty-six percent of client households served by the Feeding America network have one or more adults working. Ten percent of the client households served by the Feeding America network are homeless.

Food insecurity has remained fairly steady for the past 7 years with this year being the highest observed increase since national food security surveys were initiated in 1995 —36 percent increase over 2007.

Americans care about hunger if they understand its magnitude, but too few are aware of the problem; they think "not in my town," but 49 million don't all live "someplace else."

Just because a person has a job doesn't mean he or she has enough money to put a meal on the table. In fact, 36 percent of the households served by the Feeding America network have at least one adult working.





According to the USDA, the cost of groceries for a family of four with two elementary age children could total up to approximately \$14,000 per year. For a family earning \$30,000 annually, this means that the cost of groceries could account for almost half of their income.

National and Local Presence

Feeding America comprises the national office, located in Chicago, and its membership of more than 200 food banks across the country. The network fights hunger from coast to coast, and right in your hometown.

The responsibility of the national office is to ensure food is consistently allocated to all 203 network members and to raise awareness of hunger in America to meet the needs of the 49 million Americans facing hunger across the country.

The collaborative efforts of the Feeding America national office and its more than 200 network members result in providing food to more than 37 million hungry Americans annually.

Product Mix

At Feeding America, we strive to secure donated items that are in great demand by network member food banks and the charitable agencies they serve.

We place a special emphasis on securing baby food items, cereal, complete meals, soups and stews, dairy, fresh fruits and vegetables, canned and frozen fruits and vegetables, grains, 100 percent juice, meat, poultry, beans, peanut butter, nutritional aids, pasta and rice.



These donations are often hard to secure. Subsequently, members will infuse their inventories through special food drives and purchase programs. In fact, many members now purchase a stable base of items so that they can guarantee to their agencies that they will always have milk or some variety of canned vegetables on hand.

Feeding America is committed to continuing our focus on securing nutritious items and working with companies that produce healthy products. However, we cannot forget or ignore the importance and generosity of the non-food donations we receive from manufacturers, retailers, and co-packers.

Items such as shampoo, toothpaste, diapers, bleach and laundry detergent are greatly appreciated by the people we serve because food stamps cannot be used to purchase household and personal care items. More importantly, these donations can be critical when we assist our members in times of disaster.



Crisis and Disaster Response

Feeding America's goal is to mobilize and feed the hungry in any type of crisis. We are prepared for all emergency situations – at the local, regional or national level.

We have a proven plan of action with an established national network of member food banks ready to respond quickly and efficiently. When disaster strikes, the Feeding America network is ready to provide relief supplies to emergency feeding centers operated by organizations including the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, the Southern Baptist Convention and others.

During the past five years, Feeding America and our national corporate donors have provided more than 100 million pounds of emergency food and disaster-relief supplies to individuals and families devastated by disaster.

Food Safety

We are committed to providing safe and nutritious food to the hungry. Our inventory is consistently monitored to provide the highest-quality food possible to people in need.

Our network member food banks follow the *First In, First Out* method of inventory rotation management. This method ensures that products are distributed in the order received and do not linger in the food bank. Food that exceeds the manufacturer's shelf-life is destroyed, to ensure that our clients receive safe, high quality food.

To ensure the safety of the food we distribute, we comply with United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations, and all applicable state and local health department regulations. If state or local health department regulations are more stringent than Federal regulations, our members are required to follow the state and local regulations.

"When in doubt, throw it out," is the motto at many of our network members. Only safe, wholesome products are distributed by the network. We are committed to never putting anyone's health or well-being at risk.

The national office routinely monitors information relating to food recalls. This information is promptly conveyed to the members and their agencies. They then take appropriate actions to ensure that recalled food does not reach our clients.

Hunger-Relief Programs

The Feeding America network **supports seven programs:**

- **BackPack Program** - provides food to at-risk children on weekends and out-of-school periods.
- **Disaster Relief** - provides relief supplies to emergency feeding centers serving disaster victims.



- **National Produce Program** - offers services built around securing and distributing fresh produce throughout the Feeding America network.
- **Kids Cafe** - provides free meals and snacks to low-income children through a variety of existing community locations where children congregate such as Boys and Girls Clubs, churches or public schools.
- **Relief Fleet** - works to lower transportation costs by soliciting free or deeply discounted freight for donated loads for all network members.
- **Seafood Initiative** - brings a high quality, highly nutritious source of protein that is vital to the health of those served by network member food banks.



Nutrition and Obesity

Obesity is a significant problem in the United States. Nutritious food costs more than junk food, meaning nutritious food is even more difficult for low-income Americans to acquire.

Feeding America is committed to providing access to nutritious food for all hungry Americans. Last year, fresh produce was the largest category of food the Feeding America network provided to agencies nationwide. Our network values nutrition education. In fact, more than half of the food we distribute to our members is nutritious foods.

Providing nutritious foods is a high priority within our network. Our goal is not to just fill people up with food, but ultimately with nutritious food. We strive to achieve that goal every day. Our network of food banks help families make more nutritious choices.



Child Hunger

The Feeding America network is committed to ending childhood hunger in America.

According to the USDA, more than 17 million children are living in food-insecure households. Proper nutrition is vital to the growth and development of children, particularly for low-income children.

Nearly one in four children (22.5 percent) live in food insecure households in the United States.

In response to these needs, the Feeding America network operates programs that fight child hunger including Kids Cafe and Backpack Program.

Kids Cafe is national program of the Feeding America network and one of the largest charitable meal service programs in the United States, providing free, prepared, nutritious food to needy children.

The Backpack Program is a national program of the Feeding America network that provides food to at-risk children on weekends and out-of-school periods. Federal breakfast and lunch programs do not support children during those times.



Senior Hunger

After a lifetime of work, many seniors are living on fixed incomes that often force them to choose between paying for healthcare or prescriptions and buying groceries.

Because they often need the medication to maintain their health, many elderly Americans must forgo the foods they need to stay healthy. Limited mobility and dependence on outside assistance makes seniors particularly vulnerable to hunger.

According to *Hunger in America 2010*, among client households with seniors, 32 percent have had to choose between paying for food and paying for medical care.

Many network members partner with local meals on wheels programs and other food transport organizations to get food to those seniors that need it most.

Working Poor

One of the most common misconceptions is the assumption that if someone is hungry, that means they do not have a job and are living on the streets. What most people don't understand is that anyone can experience hunger. It is a silent epidemic that affects 49 million Americans.

According to the US Census Bureau, in 2008, 19 million people lived in working-poor families. This translates into 8 percent of all American families living below 100 percent of poverty have at least one family member working. In fact, 36 percent of client households served by the Feeding America network have one or more adults working.

Rural Hunger

Rates of food insecurity, the statistical measurement of hunger or near hunger, among rural households is generally lower than urban households, but slightly higher than the national average.

The irony is that many of these food-insecure households are in the very rural and farm communities whose productivity feeds the world and provides low-cost wholesome food for American consumers.

Challenges facing rural areas differ from metro/urban areas in several significant ways:

- Employment is more concentrated in low-wage industries
- Unemployment and *underemployment* are greater
- Education levels are lower
- Work-support services, such as flexible and affordable child care and public transportation, are less available
- The rural marketplace offers less access to communication and transportation networks
- The rural market place offers companies less access to activities that foster administration, research and development



The fact that so many people need to turn to a food bank or church pantry just to eat in the very same communities where the food is raised is a sad reminder of how much more needs to be done.

Suburban Hunger

The hidden nature of hunger and poverty makes us less aware of its prevalence in the suburbs, but hunger does exist in the suburbs and it is growing. The growth of poverty and hunger in the suburbs is caused by the lure of job growth, the revitalization of central cities making city life too expensive for many poor people, and the creation of cheaper housing in "inner ring" suburbs, as middle class people move farther out.

The Feeding America network estimates that 42.6 percent of all clients reside in rural/suburban areas. 26.9 percent of households with children reside in suburban areas and 28.5 percent of households with children reside in rural areas.*

Retail Store Donation Programs

Retail store donation programs provide protein, dairy, deli and produce items that would otherwise not be available to food banks. These programs recover perishable and non-perishable products from retail grocery stores and distribute them to food banks within a timely manner of being pulled from the shelves.

The product is pulled from shelves when it no longer meets the retailer's marketing standards, because it has reached its "sell by" date, is slightly damaged, or is not selling at expected rates. All products recovered are safe, healthy and wholesome. We follow the standards of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). If food is unsafe, it will not be distributed by a local food bank member.

In the absence of these recovery programs, such products would eventually be wasted or thrown away.

Role of Public Policy in the Fight against Hunger

The United States is the largest and most efficient food producer in the world, so the resources to solve the problem of hunger exist. Feeding America's public policy efforts focus on working with Congress, as well as state and local officials, to strengthen and expand the programs and solutions available to our nation's food insecure.



Feeding America fights for funding and positive programmatic changes for a variety of critical anti-hunger programs, including the following:

- **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)**, a federal program that provides food at no cost to low-income Americans in need of short-term hunger relief.
- **Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)** provides commodity food packages for low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women, other new mothers up to one year postpartum, infants,



children up to their sixth birthday, and elderly persons at least 60 years of age who meet income eligibility requirements.

- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, formerly named the Food Stamp Program, is the cornerstone of the federal food assistance programs providing crucial support to low-income working families, children, seniors and other needy Americans.
- **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**, a program of the United States Department of Agriculture that provides low-income children with free, nutritious meals during the summer months when school is not in session.
- **The Good Samaritan Tax Relief Incentive Act**, introduced by Senators Richard Lugar (R-IN) and Blanche Lincoln (D-AR) on February 27, 2007, permanently extends the special enhanced tax deduction to all business taxpayers.

Volunteer Force

Volunteers are the lifeline of our nationwide charitable feeding system. More than 700,000 people volunteer each year to help our network feed the hungry. In fact, 66 percent of pantries, 41 percent of kitchen programs, and 11 percent of shelter programs have no paid staff and rely entirely on volunteers.

Volunteers range from a retiree who packs bags once a week, to a family that works in a soup kitchen on weekends, to a school classroom that helps at their local food bank once a year.

The Beginning of Food Banking



For 30 years, the Feeding America network of member food banks have been rescuing food that would otherwise go to waste and redirecting it into channels to feed hungry Americans.

John van Hengel, a retired businessman and Phoenix resident, initiated the concept of food banking in the late 1960s after discovering a woman going through a dumpster to find food for her family. Van Hengel started rescuing food in the community, and opened a warehouse called St. Mary's Food Bank, recognized as the nation's first food bank, to store food for distribution to local charitable agencies.

In its first year, Feeding America distributed 2.5 million pounds of food to 13 food banks; today more than 3 billion pounds of food are distributed to more than 200 food banks.

Food Bank Operations

Food banks source and distribute food and non-food products to member agencies that feed hungry people. Operating a food bank requires a staff with skills in management, logistics, food safety, transportation, inventory control, food sourcing, fund development, marketing, volunteer development, community organization and customer support and service.



As a nonprofit organization with federal tax exempt status, all network members are required to be governed by a volunteer board of directors which is responsible for providing oversight, establishing organizational policies and establishing strategic direction. To comply with 170e3 of the Internal Revenue Code, all food bank members of Feeding America must either have obtained their 501(c)(3) status or be a program of an organization that has its 501(c)(3) status.

All food bank operations require a warehouse designed to safely receive, store and distribute products to member agencies. In some cases, food banks distribute product to member agencies with a shared maintenance fee. A shared maintenance fee is a handling fee paid to food bank distribution centers by member agencies and is based on a per pound basis in return for services provided to them by food banks.

The function of shared maintenance fees is to support the work of getting food and grocery items to the people who need it, when they need it, where they need it. Similar to food banks, some food-rescue operations also utilize warehouses. However, most operations pick up and distribute product to agencies the same day, with no warehousing of product involved.